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ABSTRACT

This report presents comparative information on full-time students at Hudson County Community College who were required to take basic skills courses and full-time students who did not have to take basic skills courses. Data are provided on 413 students (291 basic skills and 122 non-basic skills students) whose progress was followed from their enrollment in Fall 1981 for five semesters the Fall 1983. In nine statistical tables the report provides information on retention patterns, the number of semesters enrolled, the impact of the "stopout" phenomenon, graduation data, enrollment by division, and exit performance and retention. Highlights of the report include: (1) students in need of no basic skills courses were more likely to return to the college than those students requiring such courses; however, the difference disappeared during the fifth semester after initial enrollment; (2) students in need of basic skills were more likely to have enrolled for one semester; (3) the "stopout" phenomenon was not a significant factor for either group of students; (4) 20% of the non-basic skills students received a degree within two years; and (5) one-third of the 291 students in need of basic skills exited from their basic skills courses. Of those who exited, 59% accomplished this at the completion of their first semester, 28% after two semesters, and 12% after completing three semesters. (HB)

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HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

A Retention Study of Entering Students in Basic Skills Courses and Students in Non-Basic Skills Courses

June 1985

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SUMMARY

These data compare the careers of full-time students who were required to take basic skills courses with the careers of full-time students who were in need of no basic skills courses. Students have been traced for five semesters (Fall 1981 - Fall 1983).

Retention (Table 1) - Students in need of no basic skills courses were more likely to return to the college. However, this difference disappears during the fifth semester after initial enrollment. Approximately 40 percent of all students returned during the Fall of 1982.

Number of Semesters Enrolled (Tables 2 & 3) - These tables indicate the number of semesters in which students were enrolled. Four semester data are presented in table 2, while five semester data are presented in table 3. Students in need of basic skills were more likely to have enrolled for one semester. Non-basic skills students were more likely to have enrolled for four semesters.

Stopouts (Tables 4 & 5) - These tables shed light on the "stopout" phenomenon. Few students fall into this category. Only 13 of 413 students exhibited this behavior during a four semester period. It appears that if students drop out, they are not likely to return. Stopout data for five semesters appear in table 5. Once again, few students (28 out of 413, or 7%) exhibited this enrollment pattern.

Graduation (Table 6) - Twenty-four (20%) of the non-basic skills students received a degree within two years. Four of these students also received medical assisting certificates and

two additional students received certificates in marine technology. While 28 percent of the allied health and business division students received degrees within two years, only 1 (3%) public and human services student was able to complete a program within the time period. There was only one technology student in the study. In addition, technology programs are three-year evening programs.

Enrollment by Division (Table 7) - There appear to be no significant differences in enrollment patterns by division.

Exit Performance and Retention (Tables 8 & 9) - One-third of the 291 students in need of basic skills exited from their basic skills courses (Reading). Fifty-five (59%) of those who exited, accomplished this at the completion of their first semester. An additional 26 (28%) exited at the completion of two semesters and 11 (12%) exited at the completion of three semesters. These data account for all but one student who exited. These findings provide some empirical support for the college's three semester policy. Finally, retention data for the 55 students who exited after one semester were compared with retention data for students who failed to exit within this time period. The former were more likely than the latter to have enrolled during each of the four following semesters. However, only 56 percent of those who completed basic skills returned in the Fall of 1982 and 36 percent in the Fall of 1983.

TABLE 1

Enrollment (Fall 1981 - Fall 1983) of Entering Fall 1981 Non-Basic Skills and Basic Skills Students (Full-Time)

Retention Status	Fall 1981		Spring 1982		Fall 1982		Spring 1983		Fall 1983	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Enrolled										
Non-Basic Skills	122	100	93	76	63	52	53	43	19	19[3]
Basic Skills	291 (413)	100 (100)	182 (275)	63 (66)	112 (175)	38 (42)	83 (136)	29 (33)	48 (67)	16 (17)
Graduates	-	-	(6)[1]	(5)	-	-	(24)[2]	(20)		
Did Not Enroll										
Non-Basic Skills	-	-	29	24	59	48	69	57	79	81
Basic Skills	-	-	109 (138)	37 (34)	179 (238)	61 (58)	208 (277)	71 (67)	243 (322)	84 (83)
			(413)	(100)	(413)	(100)	(413)	(100)	(389)[4]	(100)

[1]Six of these students received certificates during 1982. Five of these continued at HCCC during the fall of 1982 and four received degrees in 1983.

[2]These 24 students received degrees.

[3]The 24 Spring 1983 graduates have been eliminated from the base for the fall of 1983. The base for Non-Basic Skills students during that semester is 98 (122 - 24).

[4]This figure reflects the fact that Spring 1983 graduates have been eliminated (413 - 24 = 389).

TABLE 2

Number of Semesters (Fall 1981 - Spring 1983) in Which Entering Fall 1981 Non-Basic Skills and Basic Skills Students Were Enrolled (Full-Time)

Number of Semesters Enrolled	Non-Basic Skills		Basic Skills		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	28	23	109	37	137	33
2	28	23	72	25	100	24
3	20	16	39	13	59	14
4	46	38	71	24	117	29
	122	100	291	99	413	99

TACLE 3

Number of Semesters (Fall 1981 - Fall 1983) in Which Entering Fall 1981 Non-Basic Skills and Basic Skills Students Were Enrolled (Full-Time)

Number of Semesters Enrolled	Non-Basic Skills		Basic Skills		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	28	23	100	34	128	31
2	28	23	75	26	103	25
3	17	14	37	13	54	13
4	34	28	40	14	74	18
5	15	12	39	13	54	13
	122[1]	100	291	100	413	100

[1]Twenty-four (20%) of the Non-Basic Skills students received degrees after 4 semesters.

TABLE 4

Enrollment Patterns (Fall 1981 - Spring 1983) for Entering Fall 1981 Non-Basic Skills and Basic Skills (Full-Time)

Status	F[1] '81		F '81 Sp[2] '82		F '81 F '82		F '81 Sp '83		F '81 Sp '82 F '82		F '81 Sp '82 Sp '83		F '81 F '82 Sp '83		F '81 Sp '82 F '82 Sp '83		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Non-Basic Skills	28	23	27	22	1	1	-	-	14	11	5	4	1	1	46	38	122	100
Basic Skills	109	37	72	25	-	-	-	-	33	11	6	2	-	-	71	25	291	100
	137	33	99	24	1	<1	-	-	47	11	11	3	1	<1	117	28	413	100

[1]F = Fall

[2]Sp = Spring

TABLE 5

Stop-Out Phenomenon (Fall 1981 - Fall 1983) for Entering Fall 1981 Non-Basic Skills and Basic Skills Students

(Full-Time)

Number of Semesters Enrolled	Non-Basic Skills		Basic Skills		Total	
	Total Enrollment	Stop-Out	Total Enrollment	Stop-Out	Total Enrollment	Stop-Out
1	28	0(0)[1]	100	0(0)	128	0(0)
2	28	1(4)	75	3(4)	103	4(4)
3	17	6(35)	37	7(19)	54	13(24)
4	34	3(9)	40	8(20)	74	11(15)
5	15	0(0)	39	0(0)	54	0(0)
	122	10(8)	291	18(6)	413	28(7)

[1]Percentage of total enrollment.

TABLE 6

Degrees and Certificates Awarded (1981-1983) to Entering Fall 1981 Non-Basic Skills Students According to Program
(Full-Time)

Program Designated		Certificate	Degree
Allied Health:			
Medical Assisting	21	4 (19)[1]	6(29)[2]
Medical Record Technology	4		1(25)
	25		7(28)
Business:			
Accounting	11		5(45)
Data Processing	27		9(33)
Management	14		2(14)
Secretarial Studies	5		0(0)
Real Estate & Insurance	1		0(0)
	58		16(28)
Public and Human Services:			
Child Care	5		1(20)
Criminal Justice	12		0(0)
Human Services	12		0(0)
Public Administration	--		- -
	29		1(3)
Technology:			
Chemical Laboratory Technology	--		- -
Electronics Technology	1		0 0[3]
	1		
Marine Technology	3	2(67)	NA NA[4]
Undecided	5		0(0)
Other	1		0(0)
	122		24(20)

[1]Percentage of "program designated" students.

[2]Four of these students were also certificate recipients.

[3]This is a three-year program.

[4]No degree is offered.

TABLE 7

Number of Semesters (Fall 1981 - Fall 1983) in Which Entering Fall 1981 Non-Basic Skills Students Were Enrolled According to Division (Full-Time)

Number of Semesters Enrolled	Allied Health		Business		Public and Human Services		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	5	20	14	24	7	24	26	23
2 & 3	11	44	19	33	11	38	41	37
4 & 5	9	36	25	43	11	38	45	40
	25	100	58	100	29	100	112	100

TABLE 8

Exit Performance (Fall 1981 - Spring 1983) For Basic Skills Students Who Entered During the Fall 1981 Semester

(Full-Time)

Exit Performance	N	%
Did Not Exit	198	68
Exited:	(93)	(32)
Fall 1981	55	19
Spring 1982	26	9
Fall 1982	11	4
Spring 1983	1	<1
	291	100

TABLE 9

Retention Rate of Full-Time Fall 1981 Entering Basic Skills Students Who Exited or Failed to Exit After One Semester
(Fall 1981-Fall 1983)

	Exited			Did Not Exit			Total		
	N	%		N	%		N	%	
Fall 1981	55	(19)		236	(81)		291	(100)	
Returned:									
Spr. 1982	42	(76)*		140	(59)		182	(63)	
Fall 1982	31	(74)	56**	81	(58)	34	112	(61)	38
Spr. 1983	25	(81)	45	58	(72)	25	83	(74)	29
Fall 1983	20	(80)	36	28	(48)	12	48	(59)	16

*Based on enrollment in previous semester

**Based on Fall 1981 enrollment

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